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Book review

Chromatographic Methods

A. Braithwaite and F.J. Smith; Blackie Academic & Professional, London, Glasgow, Weinheim (1996); 5th edition; Price (paperback version) £32.50; ISBN 0-7514-0158-7, XIV+559 pp.

First published in 1963, this text is now in its fifth edition. As one would expect from a publication with this degree of longevity, the book is comprehensive and well presented. It is suited primarily to readers interested in an overview of chromatography and an exposure to the general principles of the main chromatographic techniques. It is not intended to replace the specialist texts on the individual techniques but rather to provide an integrated overview of chromatography in general. As such it is ideal as a reference text for any comprehensive course in chromatography of the type typically presented in undergraduate university courses.

All of the main aspects of chromatography are covered, ranging from the basic theory of retention, resolution, band-broadening and quantification to the major chromatographic methods, including planar chromatography (incorporating electrophoretic techniques), classical open-column chromatography, gas chromatography, and HPLC. Further chapters are devoted to the combination of chromatography with spectroscopic techniques (mass spectrometry, IR and

UV spectrophotometry, and atomic spectroscopy) and the processing of chromatographic data. For the person engaged in the teaching of chromatography there is a quite extensive compilation of model experiments (34 in total) and some illustrative problems with numerical answers.

This fifth edition features some new material, including an expanded theory section, the updating of the discussion of each technique to cover new instrumentation and column technology, greater emphasis on hyphenated techniques, an expanded treatment of data handling in chromatography, the inclusion of more model experiments and problems, and a glossary of chromatography terms.

This text is one of the very few general chromatography texts designed to give a more or less complete coverage of the field of separation science. The chapters are informative and easy to read and the terminology used throughout is uniform, stressing the similarities between the techniques discussed. The text is already used widely in teaching institutions and this use will undoubtedly continue in the future because it provides an ideal resource for this purpose. I commend it highly.

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